

A SHORT
ACCOUNT

OF

Mr. JAMES ROGERS. *K*

Written by Himself.



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A S H O R T
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SINCE I first began to recommend the great love of God in Christ Jesus to others, I have had many sollicitations to give some account of his dealings with my own soul, yet I never could prevail on myself to attempt it till now. But having kept no journal, it cannot be expected that the following pages should contain anything more than a recital of a few particular circumstances which made the deepest impression upon my memory at the time they occurred. If these, or any of them, are made a blessing to my friends, let them give God the glory.

I was born in the North-Riding of Yorkshire, in a large village called *Marfk*, in February 1749. I was put to school early, and taught to read the scriptures from a child; in some parts of which I found singular delight.

The Spirit of God began to strive with me when I was about three or four years old. On hearing a passing-bell, or seeing a corpse, I was very thoughtful, and would often ask my parents pertinent questions about a future state. On seeing lightning, or hearing a loud clap of thunder, my fears were usually alarmed to a high degree; and the more so as an impression always followed me, that it was God speaking from the clouds; and as I greatly expected, at these times, that he was just descending to judge the world, I would run to the door to see him come! Such ideas as these were much increased and confirmed by several dreams, which I had from my infancy, about death, judgment, heaven, and hell.

When I was about ten years of age, I dreamed one night, I saw fire bursting out of the earth in several parts; that it raged so furiously, and spread with such rapidity, that in a few seconds, the whole globe was but one blaze! I thought I saw all the inhabitants of the place where I lived, struck with inexpressible consternation and horror; and especially the bad people (as I called them) whom I had known to curse and swear, and get drunk; with many of my play-fellows, who were accustomed to lie, and cheat, and play on the Sabbath: these I thought set up such dreadful shrieks and yells, as were enough to pierce a heart of stone. As I looked up, the face of the sky seemed totally overspread with blackness. Instantly the forked lightnings began to play, till
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the heavens were all in one glare, and such loud peals of thunder followed, as I had never heard. The sun I could see no more; but I thought I got a transient sight of the moon, which appeared larger than ever I had seen it before, and as red as a huge mass of blood. The heavens seemed all in motion, and were exceedingly agitated; they appeared to work, and heave, and rock from side to side, till not one star was left remaining: thus was that scripture fulfilled, "And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind." The sky seemed next to pass away, or, (as I remember to have read) "to be wrapped together as a scroll." My favourite passage, Dan. vii. 9, 10. I now saw fulfilled: viz. "And the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool, his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire: a fiery stream issued and came forth from before him. Thousand, thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The judgment was set and the books were opened."

The thoughts I had about the deplorable state of my guilty neighbours now seemed swallowed up in a most painful anxiety for my own safety. I was waiting in expectation of a summons to the bar; but deeply conscious that I was unprepared, was alarmed to such a degree that I awoke.

After recollecting myself a little, and finding I was still an inhabitant of this world, my joy was inexpressible! Nevertheless it had a most solemn effect upon my mind, and the impression remained for many weeks. How true are those words in the xxxiiid of Job, "God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not: in a *dream*, in a vision of the night, when *deep sleep* falleth upon men, in *slumberings* upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men and sealeth their instruction." From this time I began to feel great desires to be taught how I might obtain a preparation to meet my Judge with comfort.

On the winter evenings, several neighbours frequently came to sit and spend an hour in friendly conversation with my father, and oftentimes upon religious subjects, according to their light. To these I was very attentive, and when my hour for bed came, I would beg hard to sit a little longer, though I had not courage to urge the chief reason which induced me, viz. A desire to hear what might be said upon these subjects.

I remember one night in particular, many queries were proposed about salvation; none of them thought it possible that any certainty could be attained in this life, whether they should be saved at last or not. But the general opinion was, that our actions would all be weighed in the day of judgment: and if our good deeds over-balanced our bad ones, we should go to heaven; but if the
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contrary we should go to hell. But some dissented a little from this, and thought, nay, but God was merciful, and had sent his Son to die for sinners, and that their best way would be to amend their lives, and do all they could, and Christ would make up the rest. One of these they all agreed must be the way; and to confirm them in this conclusion, one observed that the Parson of the parish was exactly of the same mind.

I endeavoured to satisfy myself with these determinations, but I could not. It was all alas! left at uncertainty: and this would not do, for one that was daily expecting a call to appear before the Judge of quick and dead.

However I thought, no way so likely to succeed, as to say my prayers regularly morning and evening, and be as careful as possible in refraining from bad words, especially from telling lies, playing on the sabbath-day, neglecting my book, quarrelling with my school-fellows, doing any thing I was taught to believe was wrong, or keeping company with such wicked boys as led me into the way of such temptations.

At eleven years of age, I was called to bear a severe trial, by the death of one of the tenderest, and best of fathers. He had been subject for many years to what we call the Heart-Cholic and was often apparently near death. At such times, when every other hope seemed to fail, I would
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get into a corner, fall down upon my knees and there pray and weep and wrestle with God to spare his life, and though I knew not the Lord, yet I often felt a confidence that he heard me, and would grant my request: and when I found it so, such gratitude and uncommon sweetness would rest upon my mind for many days, as is better felt than expressed: however he died at last of that disorder, after a few days illness.

For some time I was quite inconsolable; and had I been possessed of the whole world, I would gladly have given it all to have died with him, so I had been prepared. But as I knew I was not, I earnestly begged of my eldest brother (then upwards of twenty) to tell me what I must do to be saved; believing as soon as I was ready for heaven, God would certainly take me, which was all I wished for. But alas! I gained no ground, for want (I believe) of proper instruction; for as yet the light of the glorious gospel had not shined in that neighbourhood.

My father leaving no will, and his little property consisting chiefly of land, fell of course to my eldest brother, so that the family soon after became dispersed. I was removed to some distance among strangers, but I found favour in their sight, and was suffered to want for nothing. Here I got a new set of acquaintance, but equally destitute of the knowledge of God.

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It pleased Him however, whose ways are in the mighty waters, and his judgments in the great deep, to find means to teach me the knowledge of his salvation.

A wild young man, a few doors from where I lived, contrary to the will of his parents, and against the advice of all his friends, would go to sea; but he had not been there long before he was heartily weary, and ran away from his master. He was ashamed however to return home, and equally afraid of being known, as it was in the height of the French war when the press was very hot. He therefore set out for some inland town and took up his residence for some months in *Northampton*. Here the poor prodigal had time for reflection, and began to think on the mercies he had slighted in his father's house. By this strange chain of providences it was that he became acquainted with the Methodists, a small body of whom were in this place. He was invited by them, and afterwards went constantly to preaching. His conscience being very soon thoroughly awakened, he readily joined their little Society, and became a steady member.

After several months, he took courage, and wrote home to his friends. His father, (always tender over him) was filled with joy to hear of his long lost son, and went to the Captain he had sailed with, got the indenture at a considerable
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expenſe, and the matter was made up, which happy circumſtance no ſooner reached the young man, than he ſet off and returned to his father's houſe with a glad heart.

His old acquaintance flocked to ſee him upon his arrival, and expected feaſting, merriment, and as they call it, great doings. But the tables were now turned. He began to exhort us all to “flee from the wrath to come!” enforcing the neceſſity of repentance and the new birth, that old things muſt be done away, and all things become new: and obſerved, that inſtead of gluttony, drinking, ſinging and dancing, we ought rather to fall upon our knees and give God thanks for all his benefits,

His former companions gaped and ſtared at him as a monſter, and ſome of them came near him no more, ſwearing he was turned Methodiſt, that his brain was hurt, and that if they did not keep from him, he would convert them all, and make them as mad as himſelf. But theſe things had a very different effect upon me; I looked upon him as ſome angelic being dropped from the clouds, and was affected in an extraordinary manner while he was ſpeaking to the reſt! but as he took no notice of me I concluded I was too vile for ſuch a favourite of heaven to ſtoop to. I went away trembling and ſpeechleſs, ſeeking a place to vent my grief in; but it enhanced my miſery when I found I could not weep, for my
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heart seemed black as hell, and as hard as a stone. I prayed again and again, but (as I thought) to little purpose. However I was clearly convinced that this was the way, and there was no other; but then I thought it was impossible I should ever feel the happiness that young man experienced, unless I could go to those people, and to that place where he found so blessed a change. I enquired what distance *Northampton* was, thinking to set out unknown to any one, having a degree of confidence that God would take care of me; but finding it was near two hundred miles, and not knowing one foot of the road, and being not yet fourteen years of age, I was quite discouraged; and being no longer able to contain my sorrow, I begged one of the family with whom I resided to intercede for me with the young man, that he would only speak to me; thinking that if he would take notice of such an unworthy creature I should be one of the happiest of mortals! To my great surprize, he not only embraced the first opportunity of speaking to me, but seemed to rejoice over me as one that had found great spoil. This brought to my mind that scripture, "There shall be joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." And as with them, so I proved it to be with his people here.

From that time I date my acquaintance with the people of God, and to this day I have preferred them to all others. With what gratitude
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and delight have I often reflected upon, and repeated those lines,

“ What a mercy is this,
 What a heaven of bliss,
 How unspeakably happy am I?
 Gathered into the fold,
 With thy people enroll'd,
 With thy people to live and to die !”

The first Society I had intimacy with, was in *Gisborough*, a small market town in the North of *Yorkshire*, and about eight miles distant from where I lived. This was the nearest place where there was preaching, and the road to it not very good, having to pass over some mountains, and through several lonely woods, and on very dark winter evenings. But my need was such, I never thought a moment on these discouragements. Sometimes I had company, other times I had none; but I do not remember that (when business would permit) I ever neglected to go regularly once a fortnight on (I think) the Tuesday evenings, which was all the preaching we then had.

Some time after this, two or three of us began to think, if possible, to get preaching at the village where I lived. We spoke to the Preachers, who appeared very willing to make a trial, and accordingly visited us occasionally a few times. The word was attended with power, and they soon joined about fifteen of us in a Class, and
 after-

wards took us into their plan. We now thought ourselves highly honoured indeed! Our little number increased to about twenty, and then the enemy who had hitherto been pretty quiet, began to shew himself. His chief attack was upon the few united together to "Work out their own salvation with fear and trembling." Against these he roared horribly. At our preachings and public meetings, the sons of Belial would assemble in a most shameless and tumultuous manner; but were never permitted to hurt any one, although they spoke many great and swelling words.

Once while one of our friends was at prayer, and I, and a few more were kneeling by him, a big old woman, with vengeance in her countenance advanced, having a sharp, broad axe (such as carpenters hew wood with) with many dreadful imprecations against the Methodists. She cursed horribly, and swore she would be the death of some one, if she was hanged for it the next hour! She stood a few seconds with her arms extended, no one offered to oppose her, but we prayed the more fervently, till just as she appeared to be making a blow at the young man's head then at prayer, the axe fell to the floor as if the use of her hands was perfectly taken away, and she retired as fast as she could into another room, still cursing the youth for being the ruin of her son and daughter, as she was sure those false prophets would never have come there but for him, and she did not know where it would stop, but was

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sure the devil would get them all, with many such like expressions. Not long after this she was called to give up her accounts to God!

But these persecutions because of the word, proved a sifting time, and many who countenanced preaching at first, appeared by and by to have been mere "stony-ground hearers." Nay even our own Society was soon diminished to about twelve. These held out for a few months, till the Leader and his wife, with the man also who took in the Preachers, were taken to Abraham's bosom. These three going in so short a time, as a few months, was an awful visitation! Those of us that remained proving unfaithful, the candlestick was very soon after removed to another place. Two or three of us followed it and continued for a little time; but by and by, our love waxed cold also.

Though I was now about fifteen years of age, I had never been able to say, my sins were forgiven. Nevertheless my desires were strong, and often did the Lord give me a foretaste; but having no one near to speak to, the adversary gained an advantage over me. I gave way by little and little, and my old companions soon observing me less grave and circumspect, began to solicit me to join with them as formerly. This I refused for a time, but not with the resolution and steadfastness I had done before, so it only encouraged them to use other means of gaining me over. With what shame and sorrow of heart do I still reflect, that
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in a little time I joined them in parties of pleasure, and went from bad to worse till I became tenfold more a child of hell than ever. For having once given way, my conscience became my constant tormentor day and night. I compared myself to that unhappy spirit, who being cast out of his habitation, went about seeking rest but found none. Thus I continued for upwards of two years, posting as if in haste for damnation, with a lighted candle in my hand; striving to stifle conscience with repeated acts of disobedience. The spirit of God seemed for a time as if he had given me up, till I left the place I now had lived at upwards of five years, and removed to another village called *Newton-under-Ousbury*, where was a small society of sincere Christians, with monthly preaching, a public meeting, and a Class on the Lord's-day. Here the Lord began to strive with me again, but I fought against him, and still grieved his holy Spirit.

I removed from thence to *Stockton-upon-Tees*, Upon my arrival here I began to reflect upon my folly; conscience was awakened once more, and I obeyed its dictates so far as to join the Society. But seeing my Class-Leader intoxicated with liquor I was offended and went near him no more.

After spending near one year in this place, I removed to *Whitby* in the year 1768, where was a large and flourishing Society. I felt very unsettled and unhappy, till at last I resolved, God

being my helper, to join that loving people. But then I thought I was too vile, and greatly discouraged by reflecting on my repeated backslidings for upwards of four years. I doubted I should never stand long. However my convictions increased so that I could take no rest day or night, till I sent for that pious man, *Wm. Ripley*. I expected him to have accused me with my past ingratitude to God and his people; but not a word of this: no! he saw me labouring under the weight of a wounded spirit, and the comfort he administered to me at that time was a cordial to my soul. Without asking me any questions, he fell upon his knees to write a note to admit me into the society, which I received with a trembling hand, fearing my poor unfaithful heart would again start aside as a broken bow. But, glory be to God! He was better to me than all my fears. In five days he blessed me with what I never knew before, viz. A clear sense of pardon. This was on Feb. 6. 1769, about ten o'clock in the evening. I believe I might have received this years before, when under those first awakenings of the Spirit of God, had I fallen into the same hands; but the people I was first connected with, though very serious and devout, were less evangelical in their sentiments. I had still retained a notion that my repentance was not sufficient; that I must be much more in earnest; feel more terror, more sorrow, deeper convictions, &c. before I could possibly attain a sense of pardon. This my friends in *Whitby* soon discerned, and told

told me that if God saw it necessary, he would deepen my convictions; but for me to pray for this, and to wait a little and a little longer, before I would dare to look for his favour, was the ready way to loose even the distress I then felt. They therefore told me I must pray for nothing but a sense of the favour of God. Two of them one night vehemently urged me to embrace the promises by faith, assured me all things were ready, and insisted that I must, that very night, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and I should certainly be saved. At first I thought them so wild in their notions, and withal so unreasonable in their demands, that I could scarce refrain from being angry. My carnal nature spurned at it, because I thought it as impossible for me to believe, as to pull the sun from the firmament. However when they had talked to me thus for near two hours, I was exceedingly affected; and trembling between hope and fear, I begged, in a degree of agony, that they would pray for me. Accordingly we all fell on our knees. That zealous man of God, *John Rogers*, prayed first; and every word he uttered my heart felt, and I firmly believed that God would grant him his heart's desire. In that solemn moment, all the sufferings of Christ came to my mind. By the eye of faith I had as real a view of his agony on Calvary as ever I had of any object by the eye of sense. I saw his hands and his feet nailed to the cross; his head crowned with thorns; and his side pierced with the soldier's spear: with innumerable drops

of blood falling from different parts of his body, and his dear face all covered therewith. But oh, what a look was that ! Such an inexpressable degree of approbation was communicated to my soul thereby, as I shall never forget. While I now recollect it, my overflowing heart and eyes almost forbid my proceeding. In that moment my burden was gone ; my heart was changed from bondage into glorious liberty ; and the love I felt for God and all mankind was inexpressably great. I was constrained to cry with David, " Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." I seemed as if I had never known happiness till now, and could hardly think it possible I should learn war any more.

" I rode on the sky,
 Freely justified I,
 Nor envi'd Elijah his feat ;
 My soul mounted higher,
 In a chariot of fire,
 And the moon it was under my feet."

I now went about among my old acquaintance, with a confidence that they would all repent and be converted if they knew how ready Christ was to save them. Some I found willing to hear what I had to say ; others stared at me as one quite out of my senses : However as nothing discouraged me, if I found them unwilling to let me pray with them, I would drop on my knees in the
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midst of the floor, and praise God for what he had done for me, and pray that he would let them see their wants, and give them all to experience the same blessing which I enjoyed. It pleased God to work powerfully at that time, especially among the young people; many of whom came from a considerable distance to hear the word. I and some others had great delight in accompanying them on their way home. Nor can I reflect on those seasons without singular pleasure, when we sang the praises of God as we walked along, and when we kneeled down in the fields or on the sea shore, and commended each other to the grace of God. This was in the twentieth year of my age.

About this time the Lord raised up several witnesses of entire sanctification, whose daily walk and conversation did honour to their profession. With some of these I often conversed, and they would frequently speak of the blessedness of this salvation from in-bred sin. I did not fully understand them at first, but thought I was as happy as I could be; nor did I know I wanted any thing which I had not received. However not many days after this, being closely tempted I was convinced that though the guilt of sin was all done away, yet there was in me the remains of an evil nature: that though I was happy in a sense of acceptance, and had power also over inward and outward sin, yet the fountain of corruption was not dried up: that I had yet a degree of the carnal

nal mind which is enmity against God. And had I not been told that this is consistent with a state of justification, it is probable I should have cast away my confidence, as the enemy strongly suggested my experience was all a delusion. The attack was severe while it lasted, for I reasoned with the temptation till my soul was in an agony; but in my distress I cried unto the Lord, and he graciously heard me and delivered me out of all my fears: so that my evidence of pardon was more distinct and clear than ever. And as I believed the report, and cordially received the testimony of the happy few who professed sanctification, I felt strong desires awakened in my soul for that inestimable blessing; and being daily urged by some of these to press after it, and to expect it every moment by faith alone. In a little time my thirst was such that I could not rest, in whatever place, or company I was in.

“ My vehement soul cried out oppress’d,
 Impatient to be freed;
 Nor could I, no nor would I rest,
 Till I was free indeed.”

In reading the scriptures I was more and more enlightened to see, and encouraged to hope for deliverance from the root of sin. I saw there was given unto me exceeding great and precious promises, that I should be made a partaker of the Divine nature. And that the great end for which our Lord was manifested in the flesh, was “ To
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destroy the works of the Devil, to make an end of sin, and to bring in everlasting righteousness." And I farther perceived that not only the promise of God, but his oath also was given of old to his covenant people, "That they should be delivered out of the hands of their enemies, that they might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of their life."

From the manner this is introduced in the New Testament, I was led to infer two things from it. First, that the enemies there meant were our sins, especially the evils of our own heart. And secondly, that the design of God is not to defer the destruction of these till death, or even till some little time before it, but that "*Now* is the accepted time:"—for he here declares his will is, that we should thus serve him all the remaining part of our life in holiness, and without fear: which St. John in his first epistle, fourth chap. and 18th verse says, we cannot do until we are first made perfect in love.

Indeed the whole Bible seemed calculated to raise my expectation of an answer to that prayer, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." And the more I contrasted the spirituality of the law with my own corrupt nature, the more eager were my desires.

At last I resolved neither to eat nor sleep till I had my desire accomplished. I had no sooner made
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that resolution than I was tempted to reason upon the rashness of it. But such was the condescension of God, that he indulged my importunity, and granted my request. I went with a trembling heart to the very house where it had pleased him to shed abroad his pardoning love in my soul. That pious family no sooner learned my errand, than they encouraged me to expect the blessing that hour: and exhorted me to believe on the Lord Jesus for full salvation. We then fell on our knees, and a good woman, one *Mary Best*, full of faith and love, wrestled, and pleaded with the Lord for me. In less than fifteen minutes my burden was removed, and I felt an entire change, accompanied with a peculiar humbling sweetness; but not that rapturous joy, I always thought attended that perfect liberty. On this account I was tempted much to reason: and it is probable, the enemy would have rested away my shield, but for the comforting interposition of my friends, who were not, like me, ignorant of Satan's devices. They told me it was a common case that a soul might be emptied of sin, and yet not filled with love till afterwards. That the blessing of christian perfection consisted in feeling I am nothing, and Christ is all in all. This I found true by experience, and therefore I was enabled henceforth to rejoice in a full assurance of this great salvation. In this glorious liberty I walked, for at least, three months; during which time, notwithstanding I had many fiery darts shot at me, yet I could sing,

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“ Not a cloud can arise,
 To darken the skies,
 Or hide for a moment my Lord from my eyes.”

When I looked for those heart-rifings of anger, pride, and self-will, which, like dry tinder, were formerly ready to catch fire at any provocation; I found them not; but on the contrary, I found meekness, humility, and resignation. I was so truly humbled with a sense of my own nothingness, that I rejoiced to suffer reproach for the name of Christ. That natural enmity to the pure law of God being now totally removed, his commandments became more joyous than ever; and I could say, in a sense that I never could before, The law of God is in my heart, even the law of love. I felt it the constraining principle which led me to do and suffer the whole will of God. But at the same time I felt my ignorance and helplessness, together with the weakness and unworthiness which attended my best services: hence my daily cry was, “ Every moment Lord I want the merit of thy death.” And blessed be God! I felt it applied. Through faith in his blood, I had constant access to the Father, through the Spirit; yea, and had fellowship with the Father and the Son by the Holy Ghost.

My love to God was accompanied with fervent desires for the salvation of immortal souls, and a conviction that I was called of God to preach the Gospel. I thought, if I could explain to others
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what I then felt, they would all repent and be converted. I was at this time at a considerable distance from my relations, and as my first care was for their salvation, I could not rest till I reached my native place, being fully persuaded that I had a message from God unto them. I got a considerable number of my friends together, and standing up, for the first time in my father's house, faithfully warned them to flee from the wrath to come. All seemed astonished, and some were much affected. But alas! it was not as I expected. I did not find it such an easy matter to convert them from the error of their way as I imagined. I plainly saw, this power belongeth unto God alone! However it pleased him to give me some encouragement. For the second time I met them, while at the last prayer, the house was filled with groans and cries, till at length one exclaimed (viz. my sister-in-law) Glory be to God! Glory be to God! He hath blessed me! He hath set my soul at liberty! I can praise him, and I will praise him! O praise God for me! Praise him! Praise him! Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord!" and so she went on for a considerable time.

This greatly encouraged me. But Satan seemed very unwilling I should proceed, and therefore endeavoured to throw hindrances in my way. I then removed from the family I had been so much blessed with, to another, who, though much longer professing religion, yet were less alive to God.

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Here I fell into a snare, which brought my soul into great heaviness; for parleying with the temptation, I lost my confidence, and became almost distracted for a season.

About this time I had the following dream. I thought I was bit by a large serpent, which wound I knew to be very dangerous, and that unavoidable death would ensue, if a speedy cure could not be effected. But where to go for it I knew not. My hand was presently swelled to a prodigious size, and the poison seemed to spread very swiftly through my whole body. Observing this, I was in an agony of distress, when one told me of a Physician at some distance, who alone could cure the bite of that serpent. On this I determined to go to him immediately; but when I got to the door, I saw an innumerable multitude of serpents, through the midst of which I must pass. My torture and perplexity being inexpressible, I turned into the house again. But reflecting that if I stayed here, death was the certain consequence, and that I could but die, if I went; and considering farther that if the Physician could cure the first wound, he could also cure the rest; I resolved to push through them at all hazards, and so ran with all my might. I thought I got many bites more; yet none so bad as the first. At last coming to the Physician, he received me with kindness, and applied a balmy medicine which immediately relieved my pain, and removed the inflammation. Yet still my distress was great, and

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I told him, I dare not return back again ; for the numerous serpents I have just passed through will again assault and wound me. But he bade me be of good courage, and anointed my whole body with the same balmy medicine, and said, it would hinder them from wounding me, though they might assault me : but if they should wound me he bade me return to him again." On this I thanked him, and with a grateful heart took my leave. When I came towards the serpents, I saw them with joy and surprise sunk back into holes in the earth, and only their heads peeping out, except a few who assaulted me, but had no power to hurt me. So I got safe to my mother's house.

By this dream I was convinced that I ought to leave that family, and therefore resolved to do it without delay. I had no sooner fixed this determination, than a glimpse of hope was darted into my soul, and I saw that Jesus was the Physician. Believing that he was both able and willing to heal my wound, I retired (as was my daily custom at that hour) to read and pray, when the Lord, instead of upbraiding me, applied the precious balm of his blood, and restored the joy of his salvation to my distressed soul. Taking my Bible, and lifting up my heart to heaven, I opened on the seventh chapter of St. John, and coming to that passage, " Jesus stood up in that great day of the feast and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." I shall never

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forget the manner in which those words were applied to my soul. It was, as if the Lord Jesus Christ was standing before me in person, and actually speaking these words to me. If he had, it was not possible my assurance could have been greater, that all my backslidings were healed.

“ Stung by the Scorpion sin,
 My poor expiring soul ;
 The balmy sound drank in,
 And was at once made whole :
 I saw my Lord upon the tree
 And felt again he died for me.”

I now left *Whitby*, and went to reside about five miles distant. Here Providence cast my lot with a most agreeable, and happy family, and the Lord confirmed what he had wrought. The holy flame was such in my heart that I went to the neighbouring villages, and especially every Lord's day stood in the open streets to warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come. I met with some discouragements, especially from old, dry professors, who concluded I ran too fast to run long ; but in less than six months it pleased God to raise a Society in *Lythe*, a village about a mile distant. We procured a comfortable place to preach in, and the Lord added daily to our number. We then solicited the Travelling Preachers to visit us, and soon after they gave us one night in a month.

The enemy had often strove to prevent the gospel from taking root in that wicked place ; but now, seeing the word mightily prevail, notwithstanding all his stratagems, he raged with redoubled fury. Some ruffians combined to prevent my preaching ; and were determined some way or other, to carry their point. As I was not afraid of man, and the few whom God had raised up, were resolved to stand by me, we regarded not their threats.

After they had often disturbed us in our preaching-house, one night these sons of *Belial* collected all their forces, and assembled at the door, to attack us as we came out. Their number was great, and I had no sooner dismissed the people, than they began the assault. Hearing this I pushed forward from the pulpit, and got into the midst of them. They saluted me with volleys of oaths, and showers of stones and dirt ; and in less than two minutes fell to blows. One of the stoutest of them advanced, with eyes full of fury, and made several strokes at my head, but I received them upon my left arm, which, by this means, was much bruised. When he could not bring me to the ground, he was enraged, and watching his opportunity, whilst I endeavoured to rescue one of my friends whom they were beating, he came behind, and gave me such a blow on my right temple, that I staggered like a drunken man. My hat fell off, and my senses were greatly confused ; so that I must have fallen, had he followed

lowed is blow. This doubtless he would have done ; but in that moment a young girl, who had lately been awakened and had joined our Society, thinking I was much hurt, instantly took up a stone, about two pound weight, and threw it at his back. He then left me, to revenge himself upon her; and indeed she suffered dreadfully: for, he took up a stone, equally large, and threw it with such violence in her face, that she fell to the ground, and lay motionless. She was supposed to be dead, and was carried home to her mother's house. However it pleased God that she recovered; yet she was cut in a most dreadful manner, having her cheek laid open to the bone; and she will bear this mark of suffering for her Lord's sake, to her dying hour. Others of our friends were hurt. One in particular, had his face almost covered with blood; and his coat, waistcoat, and shirt torn half way down his back. It is probable we might have come off worse still, had not God taken our part; for, "as the stars in their courses fought against *Sifera*," so, the Lord struck our enemies with terror, by sending, in that very moment, dreadful flashes of lightning from a cloud, which seemed to burst over their guilty heads. Finding an opportunity, while they were terrified, we endeavoured to escape; but retreated gradually, as some of our people were old and infirm, and we were not willing to leave them in the rear, lest they should become a prey. The next day we found means to bring some of the ringleaders to justice, and they disturbed us no more,

Having spent almost two years among these my first children in the gospel, though I loved them as my own soul, I was not easy in my mind to be shut up in one place, and that a small one. I therefore set out on foot upon a journey of about one hundred miles in circumference, preaching wherever I found a door open.

In this journey I met with some difficulties; nevertheless my encouragements more than counterbalanced them. Among several others, one thing was as pleasing as remarkable. An old man came to hear preaching at *Wingate*, a small village near *Sunderland*; and was deeply convinced of sin. He went home with trembling and terror, and could not sleep till he had found a clear sense of pardon. Being filled with joy unspeakable, he communicated this to his wife, with whom he had lived upwards of fifty years. She was exceedingly affected with the relation of what God had wrought in him; and wished to go the next evening with him, and hear for herself. When she came and heard, she was deeply convinced, and returning home, she asked her husband, if he thought God would give *her* the same blessing which *he* had obtained. The old man, full of faith, cried, "O, yes! All things are ready. You may have it this night; he hath saved *me*, who am the greater sinner." Being encouraged at this, they agreed to pray together alternately, confident that God would bless her also, even that very night.

night. They continued wrestling Jacob-like, till after four in the morning, and had no answer. Though their strength was much exhausted with praying so long, being both upwards of fourscore years of age, and consequently, very infirm ; yet they would not give up, and the Lord soon after condescended to grant her request, and to speak her sins forgiven. What a fulfilment of that promise “ If two of you shall agree on earth touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them.” And what encouragement for poor sinners of every age, that these two even at the eleventh hour, were not rejected by the Lord of the harvest.

This journey being in the depth of winter, the weather severe, and some of my lodgings not very comfortable, was the cause of a long and dangerous illness, the relicks of which settled in my left hand, which gathered and broke in several places. The whole habit of my body was brought so low, that I was thought by most who saw me to be in a deep consumption : indeed I fully expected I should not recover, and was greatly rejoiced at the prospect of being so soon with him whom my soul loved. Nevertheless, for his sake I was willing to live, if thereby I might bring glory to his name.

I continued in this weak state of body for upwards of two years. Yet I laboured as much as my health

health would permit for some months on the *Hull* Circuit: in the year 1772, one of the Preachers appointed for *York* going to *America*, Mr. *Wesley* wrote to me to take his place, which I did. And I continued on that Circuit until my strength was so exhausted that I could travel no longer. I was then advised by Mr. *Bruce*, a medical gentleman in *York*, to use the cold bath. And in preference to all others he recommended *Elkley Wells*, (a place near *Olley* in the West-Riding of *Yorkshire*.) Before I had been there a week, I felt the good effects of it. And I am fully persuaded that under God, that water was the means of saving my life. After using it constantly for about three months, in October 1773, I went to *Thirsk*, and at the request of many kind friends spent my winter there; where I employed the little strength God had graciously restored to me, and I trust, not without some fruit of my labour.

In May 1774, (although I had no relapse of my disorder) it was thought advisable I should return to *Elkley-Wells* for awhile to confirm my cure. I did so, and continued in that neighbourhood till August. I now thought myself able to take a Circuit again, and therefore at the *Bristol* Conference that year I was appointed to labour with Mr. *D. Wright*, at *Thirsk*. I was truly thankful for such a fellow-labourer: for he acted the part of a father to me. We had the hearts of the people, and the Lord added many seals to our ministry.

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In the year 1775, I was received into full connection, and appointed at the *Leeds* Conference for *Edinburgh*; where I had for my colleagues *T. R.* and *R. W.* two faithful men, whose hearts were in the work. The people solicited our stay another year; *Mr. R.* and I were permitted to remain, and *Mr. Mc N.* was appointed with us.— But though we laboured in love and harmony both with each other, and among the people, yet very little fruit appeared at the end of two years. We had found two hundred and sixty members in the *Edinburgh* Circuit; we joined upwards of two hundred more, and yet, in the end, left only two hundred and forty-five, that is, fifteen less than we found. So fluctuating was that people! Nevertheless we have a few steady, faithful, hospitable friends in *Scotland*.

I should probably have stayed longer in that kingdom, had my health permitted. What injured my constitution a second time was, a journey which I took to the *Isle of Bute*. It is eighteen miles long, and in most parts about three or four broad; situate about forty miles from *Glasgow*; its inhabitants in general speak the *Erse* language; few understand *English*. Being invited by one of the natives, a well-wisher to religion, I was resolved to give them a trial. We had about twenty miles to go by water; and in the second voyage I made, just after we put to sea, a dreadful storm arose. The boatmen were so fool-hardy as not to put back again; and, the wind being nearly right a-head

a-head of our vessel, they were obliged to tack most of the way. The women passengers and the children began to shriek, and cry dreadfully, so that the sailors were obliged to put them all below, and to fasten down the hatches. The place was small, and the people so numerous, that I expected they would be suffocated; but there was no alternative! The rest drank so much whisky, that I feared there would not be men enough sober to work the vessel. They pressed me to partake with them; but I could not taste.—No! I had other work; looking every moment when the vessel would fill, and overlet, as part of it was an open boat. The rain and hail was very heavy from the clouds; and the sea also breaking over us, I had nothing left dry about me. Thus I sat, or stood, without any shelter, for twelve or fourteen hours exposed to the whole, whilst the water ran out of my shoes. But, contrary to our fears, it pleased God, at last to bring us safe to the haven where we would be.

Having no cloaths to shift me, I went strait to the inn where I had slept before; intending to go immediately to bed, as my only resource, to prevent a fit of sickness; but, to my great disappointment, a gentleman's family, who had been detained by the same storm, had possession of my lodgings. In about two hours, an old man, hearing of my situation, came and gave me a kind invitation to his little cottage. I gladly accepted his friendly offer; and hastening home with him, got off my wet cloaths: but my bed being raised only about
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twelve inches from a damp earthen floor, and there being no fire, it was not quite so comfortable as my condition then required ; especially as the coverings were not warm, being nearly worn out. The consequence was, in a few hours I found my throat exceedingly inflamed, and a burning feverish heat through my whole frame ; so that I had little hope of ever seeing the main land again. It was also impracticable to send for any of my friends, because of the weather ; yet, blessed be God, I was not friendless : for that friend that sticketh closer than a brother, did not leave me, neither forsake me. He who filleth the vast immensity of space with his presence, can never be distant from those who hope in his mercy ; nor can he fail to deliver them in the time of need. I have reason to speak thus ; for such was his goodness, that without any human assistance, use of medicine, or any comforting cordial, (save that of the love of Christ) in a few days I was able to go out again. But I was then worst put to it for food, and having nothing I could relish, I employed a poor woman to gather me a kind of shell-fish about half the size of cockles, which was my chief support till I was able to return to the main land. After this I remained some months in *Glasgow* and *Edinburgh* ; but did not recover my health for a long time.

In the year 1777, I was appointed to labour in the East of *Cornwall*. A journey of about five hundred miles was no small fatigue in my then weak state of body : but the Lord was with me.

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I looked upon it as his doing, therefore set out in his name, and found sweet communion with him in the way.

I had long desired to converse with that great and good man Mr. *Fletcher*; and now an opportunity offered itself. Stopping at *Bristol* for a few days to rest myself and horse, I heard of his being at Mr. *Ireland's*, about three miles off, in a poor state of health, and with two of my brethren took a ride to see him. When we came there he was returning from a ride, which he was advised by his physician to take every day. Dismounting from his horse, he came towards us with arms spread open, and eyes lifted up to heaven. His apostolic appearance, with the whole of his deportment, amazingly affected us.

The first words he spoke while yet standing in the stable by his horse, were a part of the sixteenth chapter of St. John, most of which he repeated. And whilst he pointed out the descent of the Holy Ghost, as the great promise of the Father, and the privilege of all New Testament believers, in a manner I never had heard before, my soul was dissolved into tenderness, and became even as melting wax before the fire.

As an invidious report had been spread that he had recanted, what he had lately written against Calvinism, in those excellent writings of his, entitled his "Checks, &c." I took the liberty to mention the report, and asked him what he thought

thought had given rise to it? He replied, He could not tell; except that he had refrained from speaking on controverted points since he came to Mr. Ireland's: partly by reason of the poor state of his health, and because he did not wish to grieve his kind friend, by making his house a field of controversy. But assured us he had never yet seen cause to repent of what he had written in defence of the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Minutes. And though he believed his close application was the means of reducing his body to the state in which we then saw it, yet if he fell a victim, it was in a good cause.

After a little farther conversation upon the universal love of God in Christ Jesus, we were about to take our leave, when Mr. Ireland sent his footman into the yard with a bottle of red wine, and some slices of bread upon a waiter: we all uncovered our heads while Mr. Fletcher craved a blessing upon the same; which he had no sooner done, but he handed, first the bread to each, and lifting up his eyes to heaven pronounced those words, "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life." Afterwards handing the wine, he repeated in like manner, "The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c." But such a sacrament I never had before. A sense of the Divine presence rested upon us all; and we were melted into floods of tears. His worthy friend Mr. Ireland, grieved to see him exhaust his little strength by so much speaking, took him by the

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arm and almost forced him into the house; while he kept looking wishfully, and speaking to us, as long as we could see him. We then mounted our horses and rode away. That very hour more than repayed me for my whole journey from *Edinburgh* to *Cornwall*.

When I came to *Plymouth-Deck* I found a lively and loving Society. My heart clave to them. My fellow-labourers and I had a very agreeable year together upon that Circuit, and some good was done. My health also was much restored.

In 1778, I was appointed to labour in *Kent*. It was the first year of the grand encampment upon Cox-Heath; which consisted of about fifteen thousand men. Being only at the distance of half a mile from the Heath, for two or three weeks before I entered upon my Circuit, I generally preached in the Camp once a day. I have reason to believe some of the seed then sown was not lost, having since met with persons both in *England* and *Ireland* who testified they had cause to thank God for the few opportunities they then enjoyed. How often is that word fulfilled, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days."

On the fourth day of December, I was married to Miss *Martha Knowlden*, a young woman of a worthy family in *Loose*, near *Maidstone*, with whom,
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by a wonderful chain of providences, I became acquainted about three years before at *Edinburgh*. She was brought up a Dissenter, and feared the Lord from her infancy; and was often comforted and sweetly drawn by the love of God, into a patient waiting for Christ. But she never had a clear sense of pardon till some time after she joined the Methodist Society. About four years after she found peace with God, and near one year after our marriage, she became more acquainted with the deep things of God than before; in-bred sin was removed by sanctifying grace, and the perfect love of God was shed abroad in her heart. Her great modesty and diffidence would not let her say much; but all her words, works, and tempers, shewed what great things the Lord had done for her soul. One striking part of her conduct among many others I would mention here, recommending it to all our imitation, especially to those of her own sex. When any thing of a trying nature happened in the Society, while others would have been talking over, and repeating grievances, her method always was, to retire immediately for secret prayer, where she usually left her burden with the Lord. She was of few words; no tatler, no busy-body, but a keeper at home. She carefully refrained from speaking evil of any one; but when any had used her unkindly, or caused pain to her mind, she bore it in silence, and recommended them to God in prayer. She would never dispute with any one. While she lived her whole deportment was

an unspeakable blessing to me. And in her death she gave testimony of God's power to save to the uttermost them that come to him through Christ Jesus.

In the year 1779, I was appointed to labour at *Leeds*, where I found a people ripe for the doctrine of holiness; and many that year believed unto full salvation. This was the richest soil for Methodism, I had yet known. We found two thousand two hundred members in Society, and about twenty local Preachers, who greatly assisted us in the work; and the word of the Lord ran and was glorified; to which the harmony which subsisted between the Preachers, Stewards, Leaders, and people, greatly contributed.

In the year 1780, I went to *Sheffield*, where I found a large Society, but less united than those I had left; and therefore I was not so comfortable for a time as I could wish. It grieved me also that one of my fellow-labourers did not lovingly draw in the same yoke, and soon after left the connection. The uneasiness occasioned in the Society by his disaffection, for some months, threatened us with disagreeable consequences; and our enemies expected a considerable division among us: but "He that sitteth above the waters," found means to prevent it. So that instead of losing in our number, we found at the end of the year an increase of ninety-seven members.

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In the latter end of June Mr. *Wesley*, according to his usual tour, came to *Sheffield*, where Mr. *Bradford*, who then travelled with him, was taken very ill, and was obliged to desist. I took his place for about six weeks; but I soon found my constitution was inadequate to the task. Being much fatigued with riding in the heat which was very intense at that time, I was seized with a bilious complaint the first day the Conference began at *Leeds*. Doctor *Hamilton*, with other Physicians, paid every attention to my case, which appeared very doubtful for some days. The chief means whereby I found relief, were bleeding and the warm bath, but it was some time before I was pronounced out of danger. I here learnt some useful lessons while under my Father's rod: He gave me peace and resignation when my pain was most extreme, and during my whole confinement I don't know I had one murmuring thought. After my recovery, I felt a degree of gratitude I had not known before; and a resolution fixt in my heart, to be more devoted to God, and zealous for the good of souls than ever.

I was appointed to labour another year in *Sheffield*, and was highly favoured with the assistance of two good young men. We laboured together in harmony; had peace in all our borders, and the work of God greatly prospered. Many souls were awakened and born of God, and one hundred and forty was added to the Society.

In the year 1782, I was appointed for *Macclesfield*. As the Circuit was large and unweildy, four Preachers were sent, with instructions to divide it. We did this in the best manner we could, and my worthy colleague, Mr. *Myles*, took charge of the *Burslem* division. But this, with some other amendments, such as furnishing the Preacher's dwelling-house by subscription, changing the Stewards, &c. gave deep offence to a few individuals: but the hearts of the people were united to their Preachers; and notwithstanding all the difficulties we met with, we were greatly comforted among them, and at the end of two years I had the satisfaction of leaving them considerably increased in number; and, I trust, upon the whole, not less alive to God than I found them.

But all the trials I had ever known were small when compared with that I was here called to bear. After a lingering sickness of about two months continuance, the Lord saw it right to tear from my bleeding heart, the dear partner of my cares and sorrows, my ever faithful and affectionate wife.

As it so nearly concerns myself, and will probably be a blessing to some into whose hands these pages may fall, I shall make no apology for inserting a part of what passed during her last sickness.

It was on new year's day that her danger began first to appear. After the renewal of the covenant,

it was impressed deeply upon my mind, that her sickness would be unto death. Being greatly distressed on her account, I went to her, and told her my fears for her. She replied, with her usual sweetness, "Perhaps my life may not be in danger. You can remember the time when I was reduced much lower than I am now, and yet the Lord restored me. He bringeth down to the grave and raiseth up again. The Lord can do great things. Nay, he hath done great things. Fear not, and all shall be well."

Jan. 7th. She still continued to grow weaker. Besides many other things which passed in conversation concerning her past life, and the dealings of God with her soul, she said to me, "What pleasure should it afford us, my dear, that we can look back on the five years we have lived together, and say, we have been helps and not hindrances to each other in the ways of God? And what cause have you, as well as I, to be happy in the reflection, that we have never had one jarring string since we knew each other; that notwithstanding we have had many trials from others, yet we have never been the least cause of sorrow to each other? And if the Lord should take me now, you will follow me, but not yet. No, my dear, you have more to do and to suffer; but he who has hitherto supported, will still be your helper. You will live to be more useful, and more happy than ever. The Lord knows you are upright before him, so that you have nothing to fear.

fear. He will lay underneath you his everlasting arms, therefore go on, and let nothing discourage you. I believe the Lord will prosper what you take in hand, and that he will bless the children, and make them his children. You may be discouraged to think how you shall do with them when I am gone ; but you need not. The Lord will raise you up friends where you do not expect, and you shall want for nothing; and what is best of all, I shall meet you in glory."

In the evening she desired the children, *Joseph* and *Benjamin*, might be brought to her bed side. She kissed them both, and prayed that the blessing of *Jacob's* God might ever attend them; and then added, "I believe God will bless you, and make you a blessing to many. I believe he will make you good men, and you will one day follow me to heaven.

Jan. 14. A part of the morning she was scarce able to speak at all; but her mind seemed quite composed, and a heavenly sweetness was in her countenance. I prayed with her, and afterwards being seated by her she burst suddenly into tears. On being asked the cause, she said, "O! 'tis happiness makes me weep. I am thinking of Jesus, and how his name charms all the heavenly host, and the thought is almost overcoming. O! he is a precious Saviour! I have many relations in heaven who are near and dear unto me; a father, a mother, and sisters, and brothers, and others whom

whom I loved tenderly ; but they are all nothing when I think of Jesus : and I shall soon see him and praise him better than I can now. Angels will be blessed companions above : but O ! they are nothing ; I can only think of Jesus. My sweet Saviour ! I do love thee ! Where is that hymn that speaks of Jesus as the subject of all the angels songs ?" The hymn was read, though with many tears, while she seemed to *rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.*

On the same day Mr. *Joseph Roe* called to see her, and being desired to walk up stairs into her room, she said to him, "The Lord favours me, Mr. *Roe*, in a peculiar manner. I have no pain ; and, after all my unworthiness, he gives me sweetly to rejoice in his love on a sick and dying bed. His condescension is so great, that, at times, a sense of it almost overpowers me. He is a precious Saviour, indeed he is ; and those that cleave to him with a sincere heart will ever find him so. He knows I am sincere, though very undeserving ; and all I have ever feared, or that has harrassed my mind, has been, lest others should think me more than I am. I would not deceive any one by professing more than I possess ; the Lord knoweth. No ; it would be an awful thing to do that. I would be sincere. It is good to be sincere. We shall all find it so when we come to a death bed. I could wish we might all live to God more than we have ever done. What is the world, or any thing in it ? Jesus is all ; and I shall

fear. He will lay underneath you his everlasting arms, therefore go on, and let nothing discourage you. I believe the Lord will prosper what you take in hand, and that he will bless the children, and make them his children. You may be discouraged to think how you shall do with them when I am gone ; but you need not. The Lord will raise you up friends where you do not expect, and you shall want for nothing ; and what is best of all, I shall meet you in glory."

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shall praise him for ever, I know I shall." While she spoke these words, she seemed to be in an ecstasy of joy and praise. Her sparkling eyes and outspread arms made her to appear as if she were even now about to take her flight to her immortal home.

In the evening she called upon us to sing,
 "He comes, he comes, the judge severe."

And she sung the whole hymn with us so loud, that all were amazed, and much affected.

Jan. 18. She had a violent fit of coughing, and nature seemed in agonies. I said to her, my dear, this is hard work. She turned her languid face towards me and said with a heavenly smile upon her countenance, "No, my dear, it is not. No, no, it is not hard. Jesus makes it sweet; he suffered much more for me. I should be ungrateful if I thought it hard, or if I had a murmuring thought. I am sensible it is the Lord's goodness to me, and am thankful for it. My mind is composed, and I am sure all will be well."

Jan. 19th. This was a happy day to her. While I stood by the bed side, she looked at me, and said, "The Lord will bless you, my dear. He will bless you. What cause have I to be thankful for the day I first knew you? But for you I might have been cast into the way of a gay world;

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world ; but the Lord made you the instrument of snatching me from it. I hope I shall be one diamond more in your crown, and shall praise God to all eternity for you. Go on, my dear, and the Lord will be with you."

Jan. 23d. *George Pearson* called to enquire after her, and by her desire he was asked up stairs, She gave him her hand and said, "Well, well. *George*, I am glad to see you. I love to see the Lord's children, and I believe you are one. You have known the ways of God a long time. The Lord has done much for you. Yes, he has blessed you, and he will bless you still. He is a good and faithful God. I have ever proved him so, and especially in this time of need. He does bless me, and comfort me, and will save me to the end. I believe you have had many trials since you first set out in the ways of God. You now grow near the end of your journey. You will not forsake the Lord now, and I am sure he will not forsake you. No, no, the Lord never forsakes his people. You see he does not forsake me, unworthy as I am." He prayed with her, and she found her mind much encouraged.

Some time after this, she called the maid to her and said, "*Phæbe*, be sure you be a good girl. Serve the Lord: give him your heart. Religion is the best thing, *Phæbe*. Nothing else will do. Be truly religious, and then you will be fit to live, and fit to die. O! it is a blessed thing to be devoted to God in our youth. Don't forget what I say.

I say. I am dying. You may live many years, or you may follow me soon: we cannot tell. The Lord knoweth. O think on these things, do. And then you will see me again in heaven."

Jan. 24. Being asked how she felt, she replied, "Very comfortable. I feel the Lord is good to me. And notwithstanding all my unworthiness, I believe he will accept me. Nay, he does accept me. I know that Jesus is mine, and I am his! I am indebted to his merit for all. I am saved through Christ alone. I leave my every concern with him, and I am sure he will keep that which I have committed to his care. My husband, my children, my friends, my every care I leave with Jesus. I fully believe he will preserve them all, and we shall meet above."

Jan. 26th. Being spent with coughing, when she had recovered a little, she said, "Well, but I know my reward is with the Lord, and my God will be my help. And glory be to his dear name, I feel he doth help me. My trust is in the Lord; he is near unto me at all times." And again, after a severe fit of sickness, and a sleepless night, she turned her face to Miss Roe and said, "Well, my dear, I think the Lord will not tarry long now. O! he is a sweet Saviour. We shall soon meet where we shall rejoice together for ever:

"How shall we sing and triumph there
Our dangers and escapes compare,
Our days of flesh and woe!"

"Yes, we shall, we shall."

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She continued in a rapture of joy, as one just ready to take the wing, while Miss *Roe* repeated the following lines from a divine Poet.

“ He looks from the skies,
He shews us the prize,
And gives us a sign
That we shall o’ercome by the mercy divine,” &c.

For several days she was exceedingly weak, and could scarcely be heard to speak. At times, however she whispered, “ O my precious, precious Lord, thou wilt not tarry long! I shall soon be with thee. What a day will that be! I shall praise thee for ever! O what a sweetness, what happiness I feel! I am quite resigned, entirely so. All the Lord does is well done indeed! I am glad it is just as it is; all is right. Come, Lord Jesus! O come quickly! O come my dear Jesus, do come and help me! Thou wilt come soon. I shall soon be with thee.”

Feb. 15th. A little before three o’clock this morning she had a severe fit of coughing, and tried to get up the phlegm in vain. I said to her, “ You have had a hard struggle, my dear; but this also is permitted by him who loves you tenderly. Yes, you are dear to him. God has some good end to answer in thus lengthening out your affliction. But your Lord is now saying, It is enough! Only have faith and patience a few minutes longer, so shall you be *perfect and entire*,

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lacking

Lacking nothing. You are this moment suffering all you ever shall suffer to all eternity. You shall never, never, never suffer again! Methinks I hear Jesus now saying, Lo! I come quickly to wipe away all tears for ever from your eyes. It is done. Thou shalt sorrow no more, neither shalt thou feel any more pain!"

She replied, "These are precious words. They comfort me; and I believe it is all true, and I shall prove it so. Yes, I shall! I shall! I shall!" After that she lay composed about a quarter of an hour, silently breathing prayer and praise to God. Then the cough came on again, and a most severe struggle ensued, which threw her into the agonies of death. She was convulsed all over in a moment. While the agony was at the height, it was thought she was delirious. Just as it seized her she cried, "Pray! pray! pray! O pray for me." We did so. The agony abated a little, and her reason returned. She instantly cried out with an uncommon vehemency, clasping her hands, "My God! My God! My Saviour! My King!" repeating it many times. I replied, "Yes, my dearest creature, your Saviour is coming to you; He is here. Jesus is now standing by, and his holy angels with him. They are all waiting for you. See! See! their wings are already spread out to bear you away." She cried out with an uncommon loud voice, "I know it! I know it well!" repeating the same words at least ten times over. She was then silent a little. When

I could

I could speak, I repeated to her those lines of
Mr. *Pope*

“ Hark ! Hark ! they whisper ! angels say,
Sister spirit come away ! ”

Telling her these her favourite verses were now
completely fulfilled in her : that she was now in
effect saying,

“ Cease, fond nature, cease thy strife,
And let me languish into life.”

I was going on to the end of the verse; but just
as I repeated

“ Heaven opens on my eyes ! ”

She stopped me short by crying out so loud as to
be heard down stairs, and through every room in
the house, “ See ! See ! See ! What a fine man !
See ! See ! See ! What a fine man ! ”—The scene
was very affecting. In that dread moment such a
solemn awe fell upon all those about her, as if the
Lord Jesus Christ was visibly present. From
the uncommon vehemence and unshaken confi-
dence with which she had just before used the
prayer of her dying Lord, “ My God ! ” “ My God ! ”
we had not a doubt, but as she was then drinking
of the same cup Christ drank in the garden (for
she was bathed all over in a cold sweat) so in like
manner was an angel sent, or Jesus himself ap-
peared to strengthen her in her last agony.

' She continued with her eyes fixed, repeating the same words, " See! See! See! What a fine man!" for fifteen or twenty minutes without intermission, till her strength was quite exhausted. Then with a lower voice she cried, " Come! Come! Come! Saviour! Saviour! Come! Come! Come!" And gently leaning back, she sweetly sunk into his arms, at half past five o'clock on Sunday morning Feb. 15th. having just seen her birth-day, and ended her twenty-ninth year in a world of sorrow, she began with her Lord in Paradise that sabbath which shall have no end. My youngest son, a lovely child, died at the same time, aged eight months; and they were both laid in one grave.

I was now left with my two little boys, one four, the other only two years old. But the Lord was merciful both to them and me, who in the course of his providence raised us up a kind friend in *Miss Roe* (the only daughter of the late Rev. *James Roe* of *Macclesfield*) an intimate acquaintance, and twin soul of their dear mother; and for whom both them and me have had cause to be thankful ever since.

As I clearly perceived the Lord had prepared in her, another help-meet for me, and one every way calculated to assist me both in my soul and labours, I therefore entered into the marriage state a second time on the nineteenth of August, 1784. And now eight years are nearly elapsed, I
have

have found no cause to alter my judgment, but on the contrary, have often blessed God for such a yoke-fellow. And it has pleased the Lord to make her useful in her present calling to many, especially those of her own sex. She was in some measure prepared for this, not only by a pious and liberal education, from her childhood, but by an early conversion to God. She was deeply awakened, and brought to the saving knowledge of Christ at the age of seventeen: and a short time after that, felt the need of a farther work of grace. For this she earnestly intreated the Lord, who soon came to her help.

“ He spoke the second time be clean
And took away her inbred sin.”

From that time, (now eighteen years ago) though variously tempted and tried in common with others, she has held fast her confidence in God. And from the time I first had the happiness of becoming acquainted with her, I have seen nothing in her conduct inconsistent with her profession. The evenness of her temper, and the cheerfulness of her disposition; as well as her faith and prayers have greatly contributed to my comfort, when closely exercised and tried from different quarters. She was certainly the special gift of God to me. And I have not the shadow of a doubt but we shall, after a few more conflicts here, follow *her* who is gone before, and all spend a

glorious eternity together in recounting the wonders of Providence and of grace.

Immediately after our marriage we hastened to my appointment in *Dublin*, where we safely arrived, in a *Liverpool* Packet, after an agreeable passage of thirty hours.

I had not been many days in that city before I saw some fruit of my labour, and was fully satisfied my going there was of the Lord. A few years ago there had been a great sifting time in the society. But the troublers of Israel were now removed, and we found the people fully prepared to receive the gospel of peace. Within the space of six weeks several found mercy, and returned public thanks to Almighty God for a sense of his pardoning love; and many more were deeply awakened.

This we received as a token for good; and the hopes of all were encouraged to expect a more glorious out-pouring of the Spirit. For this a general spirit of supplication was given, and the Lord answered for himself in a wonderful and glorious manner. At the quarterly love-feast, Sunday Oct. 10th (the first we kept together) soon after the people began to speak their experience, a poor woman under deep conviction, cried aloud for all present to pray for her. We all instantly fell upon our knees, and entreated the Lord on her behalf. In that moment the power
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of God descended in such a manner that I believe, not one unaffected soul remained under the roof. We continued wrestling in prayer for near half an hour, and afterwards found, not less than seven souls were clearly justified. And many who had received notes of admission on that occasion, were deeply awakened, and immediately joined the Society. The next evening another was justified under the word, and two more under the last prayer, when also a poor backslider felt the Lord had healed him. Within the next week following, five others were brought into gospel liberty ; and in the month ensuing thirteen more. At a love-feast held in our *Gravel-Walk* Chapel, Nov. the eighteenth, eight persons received a sense of pardon, two backsliders were restored, and a stranger who had got admittance for that time, was truly awakened. About a fortnight after this, we had our Band love-feast, when two more were justified, and three professed to be at the same time, renewed in love. In the beginning of December, one was justified at St. *Patrick's* Church when receiving the sacrament. And one who had been educated a Roman Catholic but was awakened about six weeks before, received a sense of pardon under the word in our Preaching-house : as did two more, who were convinced of sin at one of the above mentioned love-feasts.

On Christmas-Day our Chapel at *White-Friars* was well filled at four o'clock in the morning. We
continued

continued in preaching, exhortation and prayer till eight. It was a memorable season, and the power of God was manifest in the whole congregation. I cannot ascertain the exact number of souls that were converted to God, but several found a clear sense of his pardoning love shed abroad in their hearts: and many others were awakened, who had remained until that time entire strangers both to God, and his people.

The first Sunday in the new year all the society, with several other friends assembled together to renew their covenant with God. It was a most solemn season. I seldom remember to have felt more of the Divine presence at any time. The language of my heart, and I believe of most present was, "How awful is this place, surely it is the house of God, this is the gate of heaven." So it was found to be; three penitents, and two backsliders were at that blessed ordinance, reconciled to God by faith in the blood of Christ. And on the Thursday and Friday evenings following, while the form of the Covenant was farther explained, four more received forgiveness of sins; and two others under preaching the ensuing Sabbath.

From that time to the twenty-fifth of March, thirty-six more, received a sense of pardoning mercy. On Good-Friday two more were justified under the word, and one at the communion in *St. Patrick's*. On Easter-day many could witness,
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"Christ is risen indeed." Two received a sense of pardon in the morning, and in the evening four more felt the power of Him who bruised the head of the serpent, while attending to a sermon delivered from Gen. iii. 15. and beside these, three others were blessed with a degree of inward liberty they had not known before. We had reason to hope our honoured father Mr. *Wesley* would have spent his Easter with us, but being detained in *England* longer than he expected, he did not arrive in *Dublin* until the eleventh of April; before which time three more were pardoned: two backsliders were restored; and two others experienced, "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." Mr. *Wesley* spent about a fortnight in the city; during which time eight persons were justified under his preaching. And before he returned from visiting the country societies, fifteen souls found peace with God.

In the time of our Conference, two others received a sense of pardon, and three more were enabled to believe to full salvation. The whole number of souls brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God in the course of the year past was a hundred and thirty. And an increase in the Society of two hundred members, after excluding all those we judged improper to remain.

When I found my fellow-labourer was to be removed, I made it matter of much prayer to God, that he would send me another suitable in every respect. The Lord fulfilled my desire, and
gave

gave me *Christopher Peacock*; a man every way adapted to the work, who was also my son in the gospel of Christ, and for whom I had a most tender affection. He was a laborious, zealous, young man, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and his ministry was attended with abundant success. But it pleased him who seeth not as man seeth, and "whose judgments are a great deep," early to deprive us of this valuable man of God! A putrid fever was commissioned to snatch him away (perhaps from some evil to come) in the midst of his usefulness, and the full vigour of youth. He finished his course, February 15, 1786, in the thirty-fourth year of his age.

The affliction and death of one I loved so much, with what I felt for the people in losing such a helper, so greatly affected my bodily health, that for some weeks I thought I must have sunk under the burden. Application was made to Mr. *Wesley* to fill up the vacancy, but in vain, as all the Preachers were engaged. This was an awful period! And I greatly feared the glorious revival which we were now in the very midst of, would at least be impeded. But the death of a Preacher so much beloved, had a good effect upon the people; we cried to the Lord, and he was better to us than all our fears: and great as my fatigue was, my health grew better; so did the Lord perfect his strength in human weakness. I was led to consider this was the Lord's work, and that he could carry it on with, or without means, or by

what

what instruments he chose. The congregations continued very large, and the prayer-meetings and Classes exceeding lively; and scarce a week passed that some were not awakened and joined to the Society, and frequently under the word, or at other ordinances, three, four, or five, would be found to praise God, for his converting grace. And although they were amazingly happy in the love of Christ, yet there was scarcely any appearance of what is commonly called *wild-fire*, and the work was not only gradual, but deep in most of them who were the subjects of it. The number of persons whom we had reason to believe were savingly brought to the knowledge of God among us in the course of the second year, was one hundred and seventy-eight souls, which is forty-eight more than in the former year: and the Society amounted to more than nine hundred members.

Having had so considerable an increase and for so long time together, it was natural to expect (according to the common course of things) the tide would now begin to ebb. But he who is able to do above all we can ask or think, still continued to awaken sinners in great numbers. Zion's cords were lengthened, and her converts flowed in from every quarter. Several concurring circumstances induced Mr. *Wesley* to comply with the request of the Society in leaving me amongst them another year. And I was favoured with a fellow-labourer of piety, integrity, and good abilities; nor did the

Lord

Lord give us less fruit than before. When we came to deliver up our charge at the yearly Conference, after thoroughly weeding the Classes, and lopping off one hundred and twenty-six members, some for immorality, and others for omitting to meet their Class, yet the Society had increased to eleven hundred and thirty-six. Which made in all, an addition of above six hundred souls in three years. And from the best accounts we could keep, we had every reason to believe, four hundred and fifty-eight of those, were savingly converted to God.

In the year 1787, I was stationed for *Cork*. But before I could enter upon my new appointment, some temporal matters rendered it necessary that me and my wife should first go to *Macclesfield*. The journey appeared more pleasing, as we were honoured with the company of Mr. *Wesley*, Dr. *Coke*, and others of our Preachers and their wives across the channel. But although the passage in general was agreeable, yet it was attended with some danger. When we had gone about half way from *Dublin* to *Park-Gate*, the Packet, (born down by a rapid tide from the *Welsh* coast,) suddenly struck upon a rock, where we lay beating vehemently for about an hour. The Captain ordered all the women and children upon deck, to try if we could save their lives, expecting every minute the ship would go to pieces. But through the kind providence of God, and after fervent prayer to him for deliverance, it pleased the Lord to interpose

pose in our behalf, so that we got clear again, though not without some damage to the vessel. However, the pump was sufficient to keep it up, till we reached the port.

Having settled our affairs, we hastened back to *Dublin*, and from thence to *Cork*, where, after a journey of near seven hundred miles to and fro by sea and land, we were gladly received by an affectionate people, who were studious to make our lives comfortable. Some unhappy jarings the preceding year had considerably injured the work of God, so that in visiting the Classes, I found, about three weeks after I arrived, the Society reduced from five hundred, to three hundred and ninety-seven members. My fellow labourer was a pious man and a good Preacher; and we had the happiness to see peace and prosperity return. We added a hundred to the Society before new year's day; and have reason to believe upwards of sixty of these were converted to God.

But the progress of the work did not stop here; the Lord continued to prosper his word to the salvation of many souls in that city. And it is probable more good would have been done, but for a few troublesome spirits, who, under a pretence of standing up for the *Church*, hurt the minds of many. The Lord greatly blessed his word among the soldiers. Eight serjeants, and about forty privates met constantly in Class, and

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some of them became eminent for piety. Notwithstanding every difficulty cast in the way, the Society increased to six hundred and sixty: many of whom were much alive to God, and ornaments to their profession at the time we left them.

About this time one of our travelling Preachers, a pious good man, related to me the following instance of the divine interposition, viz. A few months ago as he was travelling on his Circuit, he was met by three robbers; one seized the horse by the bridle, a second clapped a pistol to his breast, and a third caught hold of him to pull him from his horse, all swearing they would instantly have his money or his life. He looked them stedfastly in the face, saying, "Friends, did you pray this morning?" They seemed greatly confounded. But one of them instantly took his watch out of his pocket; another took off his saddle-bags, and pulled out a knife to rip them open, but he cried, Stop friend! there is nothing there but a few religious books, and you are very welcome to have them to read if you please; and as to money, I have only twopence halfpenny, which he took out of his pocket immediately and gave to one of them.—Now, says he, shall I give you my coat? You are welcome to any thing I have about me: only, I would have you to remember, I am a servant of God, and am now going on his errand. I am going to preach at such a place, and I beg you will let me pray with you before we part; and
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it may do you more good than any thing I have given to you. At this one of them said to the rest, we will keep nothing belonging to this man; if we do, vengeance will pursue us. He took the money and returned it with his own hands into his pocket, and insisted the other should return the watch; which, after a little hesitation, he put back also: and the third taking up the bags laid them on the horse, and fastened them to the saddle again. He thanked them all for their great civility, and again renewing his request that they would let him pray with them, he fell upon his knees on the road, and prayed with great power. Two of them went off, but the third kneeled close by him all the time, and was very much affected; so that there was reason to hope he was resolved to become a new man.

In the year 1790, I was appointed for *London*. Here I found a numerous, pious, and loving people, who have been accustomed to the Methodist discipline from the beginning, and who, in general, pay attention to our Rules, for conscience sake. We have an extensive field of action in this great metropolis, and plenty of work for more than three times the number of itinerant Preachers, than have ever yet been employed on this Circuit. When my coming was first proposed to me, I felt exceedingly for the importance of such a charge, and should have objected to the appointment, only I was afraid of running counter to the order of God. But I did not foresee the solemn

scene which lay before me, or my timidity would probably have prevailed. I had much comfort, both in my labours and family connections for near seven months. But it is impossible to describe what I felt on the removal of our venerable Father to Paradise: yet I esteem it the greatest honour ever done me, that I was providentially called to accompany him in his last journey, and be with him in his latest moments.

Added to this irreparable loss, many other disagreeable circumstances, arising from the general stir occasioned through our whole connection by this awful event, made the situation of my brethren and me here very distressing. God alone knoweth how my own mind was exercised from the time of Mr. *Wesley's* death, till the Conference. But when I came to *Manchester*, and saw what manner of spirit the Preachers in general were of, how brotherly love prevailed among them, and that all were resolved to go on in the good old way, the snare of the enemy was entirely broken. I therefore returned to my charge with joy, fully resolved to act in harmony with my brethren, and by the help of God, to live and die an itinerant Methodist Preacher.

It is matter of praise that the great Head of the Church is still with us, in a powerful manner. Many are the souls that have been convinced, and brought to God amongst us, in and near this city, in the space of eighteen months last past.

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The congregations are large, and attentive; and the Societies are increased to upwards of three thousand members; which is more by some hundreds than they ever were before. But Satan has not been wanting to stir up a spirit of discord in some: nevertheless, the Lord has graciously overruled it hitherto; so that the people in general, are in peace, and the word of the Lord continues to run and is glorified.—But to return to my own experience.

I observed in the former part of this account that my justification was particularly clear; so was also the work of sanctification: and as I received the former of these by faith alone, so did I the latter. But I did not retain the witness of full salvation long. Nevertheless, the Lord has graciously restored it to me at different times, and yet as often have I proved unfaithful, and by giving way to unbelief, have been robbed of my confidence, as it related to that grace. I bless God, I now feel a measure of the genuine fruits of holiness; yet I am clear I have not so much of these as many of the adult children of God do possess. I feel myself utterly unworthy of the least of the mercies of my Lord, but my trust is in *His righteousness*. I feel a need of recurring daily to the blood of sprinkling; and am persuaded that the Lord will correct and pardon what he sees amiss.

It is now twenty-nine years since I was first convinced of sin; and a little more than twenty-three

three since I tasted of the pardoning love of God: from which time, (excepting once for a space of about two months) I have been enabled, through grace, to look up to God as my reconciled Father in Christ Jesus. About twenty-two of those years I have been endeavouring in some small measure, to recommend the same blessing to others; and I praise the Lord who hath given me some reason to believe I did not run before I was sent. Yet I have much cause to be ashamed before God, that I have not been more holy and more useful. However, one thing I can say, the same principle I set out with continues until this day. It was the "Love of Christ which then constrained me." And the language of my soul now is,

" My life, my blood I here present,
 If for thy cause they may be spent;
 Thy faithful witness will I be,
 'Tis fix'd, I can do all through thee."

Before I left home to preach the gospel, I thought an itinerant life was calculated above all others, to promote a growth in grace, as it cuts off all pecuniary advantages and secular concerns. I still believe God is able to uphold his messengers, and cause his grace to abound towards them. But upon the whole, few are more critically circumstanced, all things considered, than a Methodist Preacher: especially those who are called to superintend in our Connection. It is a mercy indeed, if while these are looking to their Lord's

vine-

vineyard, they do not neglect their own. I often fear this has been too much my own case; and have heartily wished I had less to do with public affairs in the Church of God: and that I might spend the *whole* of my *time* in recommending the love of Christ to perishing sinners. But one thing I firmly believe, whatever the Lord calls to, he will qualify for; and that he never calls them who love him, to any thing which will *necessarily* make them love him less; and therefore if I have suffered loss in my own soul, I take all the blame to myself. It is certain, every Minister of Christ requires, not only much wisdom and prudence, but also, peculiar resolution and firmness of mind. He that would faithfully serve Christ and his cause among *us*, must not seek the favour of men. Nevertheless, "The servant of the Lord should not strive, but be gentle unto all men; apt to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves. For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." It might have been more consistent with my own peace, had I paid more strict attention to this rule in some cases.

I have often brought heaviness upon my mind, by reproving with too much warmth, what I believed wrong at the time: and perhaps I have incurred the displeasure of some, more than needful; who for want of candour have retained prejudice to their own hurt. But I trust in future, the Lord will fortify my mind with patience,

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tience, and give me more of that love which
"Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth
all things, and endureth all things."

My soul at present doth hunger and thirst
after a more entire conformity to the image of
God. I see nothing so desirable as holiness: and
I am resolved, through grace, to recommend it to
all, both by example and precept; and I pray
God, his kingdom may descend with power. I
trust the time is near, when the Lord shall ap-
pear to "make an end of sin in me,—in all,—and
bring in everlasting righteousness; and that the
whole earth shall soon be filled with his glory."
He who hath promised it, saith, "Surely I
come quickly. Amen. Even so come, Lord
Jesus."

THE END.



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